

STATEMENT OF IRTA PROGRAM PROVISIONS

A. PROGRAM PURPOSE

IRTA Traineeships are established for the principal benefit of the participant and are designed to provide opportunities for developmental training and practical research experience in a variety of disciplines related to biomedical research, medical library research, and related fields.

The IRTA program encourages the participation of individuals from groups who are underrepresented in biomedical research: women, persons with disabilities, and individuals of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Trainees may not independently: engage in patient care activities, (any clinically related activity **MUST** explicitly be under the direct supervision and control of an NIH employee), be assigned supervisory responsibility, or sign documents on behalf of the Government (e.g., requisitions).

B. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Traineeships are contingent upon submission of acceptable proof of U.S. citizenship or resident alien status. In addition, if applicable, trainees must have a medical evaluation as directed by OMS procedures and meet the requirements of one of the categories specified below:

- **Postdoctoral** - Individuals who possess a Ph.D., M.D., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.V.M., or equivalent degree in a biomedical, behavioral, or related science and 5 years or fewer of professional level, relevant postdoctoral research experience and up to 2 additional years of experience not oriented towards research (i.e., clinical training for physicians);

Duration - Initial Traineeship	-----1 to 3 year(s)
Renewal	-----1-2 year increments
Maximum Traineeship	-----5 years*

*** An IRTA trainee may not be part-time for more than an 8-year calendar period**

- **Pre-doctoral** - Students enrolled in Ph.D., M.D., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.V.M., or equivalent degree programs at fully accredited U.S. universities, (which frequently involves dissertation research), for whom the research experience is undertaken as an integral part of the student's ongoing academic preparation and is credited towards completion of degree requirements; or students who are enrolled in graduate, other doctoral or medical degree programs and who have

written permission from their school to interrupt their current schooling and to return within one year to their degree granting program;

increments	Duration - Initial Traineeship	-----1 month to 2 years
	Renewal	-----1-month to 1-year
	Maximum Traineeship	----- 5 years

- **Post-baccalaureate** - Individuals who have graduated, no more than 2 years prior to the traineeship activation date, from an accredited college or U.S. university and intend to apply to an accredited U.S. university graduate or medical school program within the next year; or students who have been accepted into graduate, other doctoral or medical degree programs and who have written permission of their school to delay entrance for up to 1 year;

Duration - Initial Traineeship	-----1 year
Renewal	-----1-year increments
Maximum Traineeship	-----2 years

- **Technical** - Individuals who have graduated from an accredited college or U.S. university with a bachelor's or master's degree in any discipline;

Duration - Initial Traineeship	-----2 years
Renewal	-----1-year increments
Maximum Traineeship	-----3 years

- **Student** - Students who are at least 16 years of age and enrolled at least half-time in high school or have been accepted or enrolled in an accredited college or U.S. university and are in good academic standing.

Duration - Initial Traineeship	-----1 month to 1 year
Renewal	-----1-month to 1-year increments
Maximum Traineeship	-----May return for summer and other traineeship periods for as long as student in good standing. remains a

For all categories of IRTA trainees: verification of supplemental funding from an outside sponsor is required, if applicable.

Trainees may be terminated prior to their specified expiration date for scientific or other forms of misconduct, failure to comply with terms of the Traineeship or to carry out or satisfy the purpose for which it was made. When termination is proposed for such reasons, the trainee will be given an opportunity to address these reasons before a decision is rendered. In the case of interpersonal

incompatibility or other unforeseen programmatic circumstances, and absent conduct issues, the IC should arrange for transfer of the trainee to another laboratory.

C. UPON CONCLUSION OF TRAINEESHIP

Trainees are not entitled to, but may be considered for, employment or other training at the NIH.

D. STIPENDS

1. Stipends are established based on relevant research experience or completed education. However, when a trainee is receiving supplemental funding, the stipend will be fixed at such a rate that the combined levels of stipend support will match the rate for a similarly qualified trainee in the applicable Traineeship program.
2. An automatic \$2,000 advance will be provided for new postdoctoral trainees at the time of activation. An amount less than \$2,000 may be provided after activation for all other categories of IRTA trainees based on hardship as determined and approved by the IC Scientific Director, prior to the award start date that is entered into the FPS.
3. Stipends will be paid in arrears on a 30-day monthly basis, i.e., the stipend payment received for a given month will reflect the amount owed from the preceding month.
4. When a Traineeship is terminated prior to its normal expiration date, the trainee is no longer entitled to a stipend and any stipend checks received or deposited to the trainee's account inappropriately after the termination date are inadvertent and do not belong to the trainee, but are the property of the United States. Trainees should reimburse the U.S. Government for any overpayment that may occur. Knowingly cashing, depositing, or converting any such check to the Trainee's use could result in criminal penalties. In addition, any un-recovered overpayment will be treated as a debt owed to the U.S. Government

E. BENEFITS

1. Trainees must have adequate health insurance coverage to receive training in NIH facilities. This requirement may be satisfied by a policy held either in the trainee's name or in another's name with the trainee identified as a "family member." Verification of health benefit enrollment is required.

An approved plan of health insurance is available through the Foundation

for Advanced Education in the Sciences (FAES), and enrollment can be completed upon arrival at NIH. FAES coverage requires that trainees be on a training schedule of at least 32 hours per week for a minimum duration of 90 days.

Should a trainee elect FAES health insurance, he/she is responsible for enrolling in FAES health insurance **within the first 30 days of their appointment**. Health insurance enrollment will be effective the date the trainee meets with FAES and all required forms are signed and enrollment data are entered in the FPS. Trainees are advised not to cancel an existing policy until they have met with FAES

[<http://www.faes.org/health_insurance.htm>.](http://www.faes.org/health_insurance.htm)

Funds for individual or family FAES' fee-for-service Preferred Provider Option health insurance are provided by the sponsoring IC at the direction of the trainee. For a non-FAES policy, NIH will pay or reimburse for a policy issued in the trainee's name in an amount not to exceed that of the FAES' fee-for-service Preferred Provider Option, individual or family coverage, as appropriate. Alternatively, NIH will reimburse for the additional health insurance cost, if incurred, as a result of being covered under a spouse's plan and identified as a "family member" in an amount not to exceed the cost of the FAES' fee-for service Preferred Provider Option. Sufficient documentation verifying health insurance coverage and documenting health insurance costs are required for a non-FAES policy.

For supplemental IRTAs, when the outside sponsor provides insufficient funding for the purchase of health insurance coverage, the IC may provide supplemental funding to permit the purchase of a policy equivalent in cost to the FAES fee-for-service Preferred Provider Option, individual or family, as appropriate. A supplement to cover the cost of health insurance solely cannot be made: a stipend must also be authorized.

If a trainee separates from NIH; terminates his/her FAES health insurance coverage; subsequently returns to NIH; and wants to enroll again in the FAES plan; the trainee must personally pay the premiums for each of the months since termination of coverage if there was less than a three month break in the training period. If more than a three-month break in the training period occurs, the trainee may drop coverage and re-enroll again upon return to NIH as if a new subscriber.

2. Trainees do not earn annual or sick leave. However, they are excused on Federal Holidays occurring during the Traineeship period. The training preceptor may, at his/her discretion, excuse the trainee for reasonable cause such as illness, personal emergencies, or vacations (a minimum of two weeks per year) when Traineeships are for more than 90 days. Preceptors may exercise discretion in granting additional short absences

(less than a week per year) as they deem appropriate. More extended absences must be approved by the IC Scientific Director. Eight weeks of excused absence will be granted for the birth or adoption of a child, and other family health care. In addition, a maximum of six weeks per year will be excused to accommodate a trainee's military obligations, e.g., active duty, active duty training, and inactive duty training.

3. Travel costs to NIH for trainee, dependents, and movement of household goods and temporary storage of household goods NTE \$3,000 are permitted BUT are at the discretion of the IC; no allowance for return travel is authorized. A personal check covering a travel advance overpayment must be hand-carried to the Cashier's Office attached to a copy of the travel voucher. Any un-recovered overpayment will be treated as a debt owed to the U.S. Government.
4. Trainees may receive government-sponsored training directly related to the purpose of the training assignment.
5. Payment of travel to scientific meetings is at the discretion of the IC and is subject to availability of funds. IRTA Fellows may accept payment only on an "In Kind" basis to cover travel and per diem expenses from an outside entity while attending an "official duty" type event for the purpose of teaching, speaking or writing (such as presenting a paper at a scientific meeting), provided there is no conflict of interest in the source of the funds. No honorarium, or compensation for services rendered, may be accepted. Reimbursement must be from non-federal funds and approved by the IC.

F. DEDUCTIONS

Stipends are subject to Federal, state, and local income tax; however, NIH does not withhold taxes from the trainee's stipend. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) annually prepares and sends appropriate income information to the IRS and to trainees. Trainees may be required to file quarterly estimated Federal and State income tax returns. Since interpretation and implementation of the tax laws are the responsibility of the IRS and courts, trainees should consult their local IRS office and/or tax advisor if they have questions about the applicability of the current tax code to the taxability of Traineeships, the proper steps to be taken regarding tax obligations, and concerns regarding their own situations.

Since IRTA traineeships are considered awards for training and not wages for services, neither Social Security nor Medicare is deducted from stipends. Although definitive determinations regarding Social Security obligations and coverage must be made by the Internal Revenue Service and the courts, it is the opinion of the NIH Legal Advisor that trainees would not be considered to be

self-employed for purposes of coverage under the Social Security Act and therefore, can not make Social Security or Medicare payments on their own behalf. Trainees are encouraged to consult their local IRS office and/or tax advisor.

G. OUTSIDE WORK

Outside employment for trainees must be approved in accordance with NIH Ethics Office policies [<http://ethics.od.nih.gov/>](http://ethics.od.nih.gov/).

H. PUBLICATIONS

The publication and presentation of scientific research by trainees are governed by the same policies as applied to other scientists, either employed by or in training at NIH (NIH Manual Chapter 1183 “NIH Publications and Audiovisuals: Preparation, Review, Approval, and Distribution.” <http://www1.od.nih.gov/oma/manualchapters/management/1183/>

I. INVENTIONS

Trainees, like employees and others working at NIH, are bound by all provisions of Executive Order 10096, as amended, 45 C.F.R. Part 7 and any orders, rules, regulations or policies issued there-under for inventions conceived or first actually reduced to practice while at the NIH as well as by NIH Manual Chapter 203 “Inventions by Non-Employees Working at NIH or Receiving NIH Intramural Training Support” <http://www3.od.nih.gov/ott/policy/203.pdf>. Trainees will disclose promptly, to the appropriate NIH Officials, all inventions which they conceive or first actually reduce to practice during their assignment, and will sign and execute all papers necessary for conveying to the government the rights to which it is entitled by virtue of Executive Order 10096, as amended.

J. PRIVACY ACT NOTIFICATION STATEMENT

Records must be maintained in accordance with Privacy Act System Notice: 09-25-0158, Administration: Records of Applicants and Awardees of the NIH IRTA Program, HHS/NIH/OD/OIR/OE.

K. DOCUMENTS ACCEPTABLE FOR VERIFICATION OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR RESIDENT ALIEN STATUS

Trainees must provide documented evidence of their U.S. citizenship or resident alien status before their Traineeships may be activated. Citizenship or resident alien status can be established by providing one or two documents, as indicated on the following list: Originals or copies are acceptable.

List Identity and IRTA Eligibility

- United States Passport (Current or Expired)
- Certificate of United States Citizenship
- Certificate of Naturalization
- Lawful Permanent Resident Card (green card) with photograph
- A State-issued driver's license or I.D. card with a photograph, or information including name, sex, date of birth, height, weight (if on license), and color of eyes AND birth certificate
- School ID card with photograph AND birth certificate
- U.S. Military Card AND birth certificate
- Other Officially issued identifying document that provides proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent residency status may be acceptable at the discretion of the IC designated program administrative official